

Pond to be lowered in weed battle

By John Chaffee
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Duxbury

DUXBURY — The first round in a fight to eliminate weeds that have been choking Lower Chandler Mill Pond will begin this week, weather permitting.

The 39-acre pond, which straddles the Duxbury-Pembroke town line, has been plagued for years by late-summer growth of an exotic aquatic weed called fanwort.

"We're going to lower the water level in the pond by about 2 feet," said Joe Grady, Duxbury's conservation administrator. We're going to do

it gradually and leave it down for several weeks to dry out and freeze."

Next spring, he said, the pond probably will be treated with the herbicide Sonar, which should virtually eliminate fanwort growth.

Lowering the pond and using the herbicide treatment were recommended by an environmental consulting firm, Fugro East of Northboro, which completed a \$30,000 study of the pond last year.

Grady said the study found that

fanwort probably was introduced into the pond by residents who emptied their home aquariums there.

Although it's called a pond, Lower Chandler Mill is really a stream-fed man-made reservoir, he said, created as a power source for a sawmill.

Grady said Duxbury and Pembroke residents who live along the pond were advised of the planned lowering in letters mailed two weeks ago. He said a few residents, who get their water from shallow wells, may have a reduced water flow.

"We want to find out where there may be problems with lowering the water level," Grady said, "because next

year we'd like to lower it by 4 feet."

This year's 2-foot lowering is a test "to see what impact, if any, there will be on private wells and on wetlands vegetation in the area," he said.

Both the Duxbury and Pembroke Town Meetings appropriated funds — a total of \$22,700 — this year to treat the pond with Sonar, but the manufacturer wanted more time to study its possible impact on downstream cranberry bogs, Grady said.

"The manufacturer now feels more comfortable about using it, so we'll probably do something in the spring," he said.